



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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WENDY L. WATANABE
ACTING AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

April 1, 2008

TO: Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe
Acting Auditor-Controller

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Wendy L. Watanabe", is written over the printed name in the "FROM:" field.

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – SONYA LOVE
GUIDANCE CENTER GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Sonya Love Guidance Center Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Sonya Love Guidance Center, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Sonya Love Guidance Center Group Home is a six-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 12-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Sonya Love Guidance Center Group Home was providing services for six Los Angeles County Probation children.

Sonya Love Guidance Center Group Home is located in the Second District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to address several deficient areas.

The Group Home needs to paint the exterior of the home and clean, repair or replace several items throughout the home. The Group Home needs to include input from the treatment team in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs), develop NSPs that are comprehensive and include short and long-term goals, ensure that children receive dental care and encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Don Chadwick at (626) 293-1102.

WLW:DC:CC:ek

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, Department of Children and Family Services
Susan Kerr, Chief Deputy Director, Department of Children and Family services
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Dexter Love, Executive Director, Sonya Love Guidance Center
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Sonya Love Guidance Center Group Home
Los Angeles, California 90047
License Number: 198203880
Rate Classification Level: 11**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Sonya Love Guidance Center Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is adequately maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped. However, the exterior wall has writing on it and is dirty.

The interior of the Group Home is adequately maintained. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment. However, the TV room rug and the office carpet are dirty. There are missing and cracked tiles in the hallway and the floor in the children's bathroom is dirty. In the kitchen, the grout around the sink has mold, the oven is dirty, the oven door is missing a handle and does not open properly and the front right burner is not working.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. However, one piece of recreational equipment is old and damaged. There are also board games, a TV and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

1. Sonya Love Guidance Center management:

- a. Paint the exterior walls.**
- b. Clean or replace the rug in the TV room.**
- c. Clean or replace the carpet in the office.**

- d. Replace the missing and cracked tiles in the hallway.**
- e. Clean the children's bathroom floor.**
- f. Replace the grout around the kitchen sink.**
- g. Repair or replace the kitchen oven.**
- h. Replace or remove the damaged recreational equipment.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current and are developed and implemented with input from the child. However, input from the treatment team is not included in the development or implementation of the NSPs. The NSPs are not comprehensive.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendations

2. Sonya Love Guidance Center management:

- a. Include the treatment team in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans.**
- b. Maintain comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that include measurable and attainable goals.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

According to the Agency's management, there are currently no children taking psychotropic medications. This information is appropriately documented.

Children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights**Method of assessment – Interviews with children**

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks. Children also receive voluntary medical and psychiatric care. However, there is no documentation to confirm that children receive voluntary dental care.

Recommendation

- 3. Sonya Love Guidance Center management ensure that children receive voluntary dental care if needed, and maintain documentation.**

VII. Clothing and Allowance**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. However, children are not encouraged or assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

- 4. Sonya Love Guidance Center management encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**

Sonya Love Guidance Center

1700 West 60th Street
Los Angeles, California 90047
P. 323-753-8743 F. 323-291-0094.

November 16, 2008

County of Los Angeles
Department of Auditor-Controller
Children's Group Home Ombudsman
500 West Temple Street, Room 515-A
Los Angeles, California 90012

Attention: Carla Carr and/or Group Home Audit Supervisor

After reviewing the report dated November 6, 2007, from the County of Los Angeles Department of Auditor-Controller's office, Sonya Love Guidance Center is in agreement, and has made the following corrections and/or implementations.

*** Facility and Environment**

Recommendations from Auditor-Controller's Monitor

Sonya Love Guidance Center management:

- A. Paint the exterior walls.
- B. Clean or replace the rug in the T.V. room and the carpet in the office.
- C. Replace the missing and cracked tiles in the hallway.
- D. Clean the children's bathroom floor.
- E. Replace the grout around the kitchen sink.
- F. Repair or replace the kitchen oven.
- G. Replace or remove the damaged recreational equipment.

*** The above recommendations were corrected on the following dates:**

- A. Painted the exterior wall on November 5, 2007.
- B. Replaced the rug in the T.V. room and the office with new tile on November 7, 2007.
- C. Replaced the missing and cracked tiles in the hallway with new tile on November 9, 2007.
- D. Cleaned the children's bathroom floor October 30, 2007.
- E. Replaced the kitchen sink including the grout around the kitchen sink with a new sink and counter top on November 1, 2007.

(Page 2 Cont. CAP for Sonya Love Guidance Center)

- F. Replaced the kitchen oven with a new oven and stove on November 2, 2007.
- G. Removed the damaged recreational equipment on October 30, 2007.

To avoid any further deficiency, the facility manager will conduct weekly site inspections and complete the Group Home Self-Assessment Form to ensure routine maintenance; repairs and upkeep are completed in a timely manner. The administrator will conduct quarterly inspections of the site to ensure repairs and properly completed and maintained.

*** Program Services**

Recommendations from Auditor-Controller's Monitor

Sonya Love Guidance Center management:

- A. Include the treatment team in the development and implementation of the N.S.Ps.
- B. Maintain comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that include measurable and attainable goals.

*** A corrective action was implemented immediately.**

- A. A Signature line was added to the Needs and Service Plan for the authorized representative to sign this will ensure and show the participation in the development and implementation of our residents Need and Services Plans.
- B. Our clinical team is now reflecting the measurable goals. These items have specific and measurable goals which are attainable for the client concern.

To avoid any further deficiency, the administrator will monitor the clinical team's reports. The Needs and Service Plans will be reviewed within 24-hours after completion to avoid any delay in processing. Our agency plans to implement the new Needs and Services form (from DCFS).

*** Personal Rights**

Recommendation from Auditor-Controller's Monitor

Sonya Love Guidance Center management ensures the children receive voluntary dental care if needed.

*** The above recommendation was corrected on the following date:**

All the clients were seen on November 3, 2007 by the dentist.

(Page 3 Cont. CAP for Sonya Love Guidance Center)

To prevent any further deficiency the facility manager will make all dental appointment within one week of our client's placement. The administrator will conduct a monthly inspection of the folders to ensure the dental visits have been completed.

*** Clothing and Allowance**

Recommendation from Auditor-Controller's Monitor

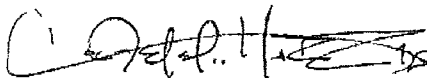
Sonya Love Guidance Center management encourages and assists children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

*** A corrective action was implemented immediately.**

All residents were provided life books to keep their past and present memories.

The facility manager will ensure our clients are given a life book at the time of admission or within the first two weeks of admission if photos are needed. The facility manager along with line staff will also offer any assistance needed in creating or maintaining their books. The administrator will engage clients shortly after placement to ensure clients have received a life book in a timely manner.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Costelelio Harris', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Costelelio Harris, Administrator
Sonya Love Guidance Center